

School Achievement and Climate

School Achievement

General Information

- As of October 2002 the 296 operating school districts in Washington reported students enrolled in 2,212 public school buildings. There were also 492 private schools in the state.¹
- In October 2004, Washington State had 1,021,502 students enrolled in public schools and 77,496 students enrolled in private schools.¹
- In 2002, about 73% of Washington public school students of all ages were White, almost 27% were students of color (7.5% Asian, 5.4% Black, 10.9% Hispanic, and 2.7% American Indian).²
- In 2004, about 38% of Washington students were eligible for free reduced lunch.³

Special Education Students⁴

- In 2004, about 12% of Washington public school students were special education students.

Table 7. Number of Children in Special Education Services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B, as of December 1, 2004		
Diagnostic Category	Totals	% of Spec Ed
1. Developmental Delays	16232	13.08%
2. Emotional/Behavioral Disability	5073	4.09%
3. Orthopedic Impairments	730	0.59%
4. Health Impairments	20270	16.34%
5. Specific Learning Disabilities	47747	38.48%
6. Mental Retardation	5575	4.49%
7. Multiple Disabilities	2543	2.05%
8. Deafness	466	0.38%
9. Hearing Impairments	921	0.74%
10. Visual Impairments	321	0.26%
11. Deaf-Blindness	41	0.03%
12. Communication Disorders	20038	16.15%
13. Autism	3736	3.01%
14. Traumatic Brain Injury	374	0.30%
GRAND TOTALS	124067	100.00%

Source: Washington OSPI

¹ OSPI website: <http://www.k12.wa.us/DataAdmin/>

² Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Summary report 2001-2002. Available at: <http://www.k12.wa.us/DataAdmin/default.aspx>

³ Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Child Nutrition Services, "Child Nutrition Programs Washington State 2005".

⁴ Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. State December 2004 LRE and Child Count Data. Available at: <http://www.k12.wa.us/SpecialEd/data.aspx>

School Testing

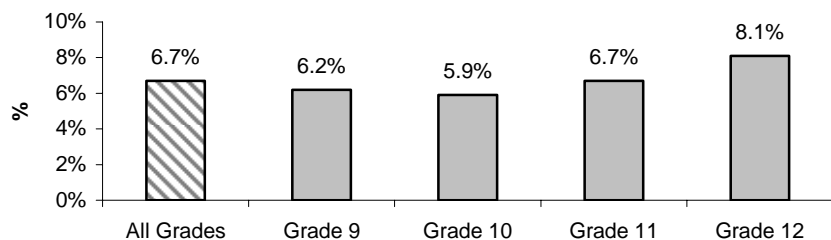
- Results for the 2005 graduating class show that Washington students have the highest average SAT scores in the nation among states where at least half of students take the test. This year's Washington scores on the verbal and math portions of the test were all-time highs.⁵
- According to data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Profiles, Washington State has a higher proportion of 8th graders proficient in reading and math than the nation as a whole. In 2003-2004, the average pupil-teacher ration for Washington was 19.3. In 2002-2003, Washington the expenditure per pupil in Washington was \$7,680.⁶

Table 8: Data From the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Profiles

	Pupil/ teacher ratio (2003-04)	Per-pupil expenditure (2002-03)	% 8 th graders proficient in reading, public schools, 2005	% 8 th graders proficient in math, public schools, 2005
U.S.	-	-	29	29
Washington	19.3	\$7,292	34	34
Oregon	20.6	\$7,526	33	33
Idaho	17.9	\$6,132	32	30
Alaska	17.2	\$9,870	27	29
California	21.1	\$7,680	21	22

Graduation and Drop Out Statistics**High School Graduation/ Drop Outs⁷**

- In school year 2002-03, about 7 % of all high school students (those in grades 9-12) dropped out of school. Males dropped out at a higher rate than females, and more than 10% of all Black, Hispanic, and American Indian students dropped out of a high school during that year.

Figure 9: Annual School Dropout Rates by Grade, WA 2002-2003 School Year

Source: Washington OSPI

⁵ <http://www.k12.wa.us/Communications/pressreleases2005/SAT2005.aspx>⁶ Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress. Data Available at: <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/states/>⁷ Graduation and Dropout Statistics For Washington's Counties, Districts, and Schools School Year 2002-03; Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, September 2004

- Of the students who began Grade 9 in the fall of 1999 and were expected to graduate in 2003, an estimated 24 percent dropped out and did not receive a diploma. About 66% of this 2003 cohort of students graduated “on-time” and the remaining 10% were still enrolled in school at the end of Grade 12. (Table 7)
- In the 2003 cohort, American Indian, Black, and Hispanic youth were the most likely to drop out. Males were more likely than females to drop out.

Table 9: Washington Dropout Rates by Student Group, School year 2002-2003 and 2003 Cohort		
	2002-2003 Dropout Rate	Estimated 2003 Cohort Dropout Rate
All Students	6.7%	24.3%
American Indian	14.6%	46.9%
Asian/ Pacific Islander	4.9%	18.1%
Black	10.2%	35.5%
Hispanic	11.6%	39.0%
White	5.7%	21.2%
Female	5.9%	21.6%
Male	7.4%	26.8%
Special education	7.2%	26.2%
Limited English	10.2%	35.1%
Low Income	7.7%	28.1%

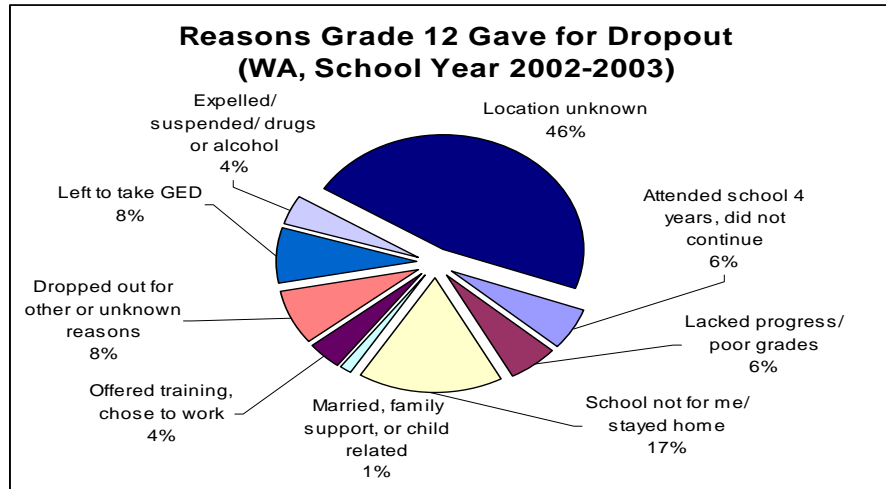
Source: Washington OSPI

- The cumulative (4-year) dropout rate for those expected to graduate in 2003 was 24 percent, which was less than the cumulative dropout rate of 28 percent recorded in 2001–02. American Indian students had the highest dropout rate (41.8%). Black and Hispanic students as well as those in special education and with limited English proficiency had graduation rates below 50 percent.
- Asian/Pacific Islander and White students had the highest graduation rates (71% and 70%) while less than half of the American Indian, Black, and Hispanic students had graduated at the end of the four-year period. Compared to the previous year, fewer students dropped out in all groups but more students did not finish in four years, so the on-time graduation rate remained the same.
- Washington State’s Academic Achievement and Accountability (A+) Commission goal is for an 85% on time graduation rate by 2014.

Reasons People Gave for Dropping Out

- The most common reasons given for dropping out of high school were school was not for me/ stayed home or left to take GED.

Figure 10. Reasons Students Gave for Dropping Out, 2002-2003



Source: Washington OSPI

Regular Attendance

- The majority of Washington students surveyed in 2004 reported they had not skipped school in the past month. About 86% of 8th Graders, 81% of 10th graders, and 72% of 12th graders reported they had not skipped school in the past month. About 3% of 8th graders, 4% of 10th graders, and 6% of 12th graders reported they had skipped school 4 or more times in the past month.⁸
- Absenteeism: For the 2004-2005 school year, the unexcused absence rate⁹ for Grade 7 was 0.6% .¹⁰ The unexcused absence rate for different groups is as follows:
 - American Indian: 1.5%
 - Asian/ Pacific Islander: 0.5%
 - Black: 1.2%
 - Hispanic: 0.9%
 - White: 0.5%
 - Special education: 1.1%
 - Limited English: 1.1%
 - Low income: 0.9%

⁸ Source: Healthy Youth Survey 2004

⁹ **Unexcused Absence Rate** - The percentage of student enrollment days in the school year that students had an unexcused absence. The definition of an unexcused absence is a local decision, so the definition differs among schools and districts. In general, a student who has an unexcused absence has not attended a majority of hours or periods in a school day, or has not complied with a more restrictive district policy, and has not met the conditions for an excused absence (see RCW 28A.225.020). (Formula: Unexcused absences / (days in school year * enrollment))

¹⁰ Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. <http://reportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us/Download/2005/UnexcusedAbsences.xls>

School Risk and Protective Factors¹¹

- Risk factors are characteristics of individuals, families, and communities that make them more vulnerable to ill health and injury. Protective factors are characteristics that reduce the likelihood of disease, injury, or disability. The presence of multiple risk factors predicts an increased likelihood that an individual will engage in substance use, while the presence of protective factors helps to buffer the effect of risk factors and increase resilience.
- School is an environment in which young people spend a great deal of time. As a result, schools have the opportunity, although not the sole responsibility, to greatly influence adolescent development.

Table 10: School Risk and Protective Factors	
Risk Factors	
Academic failure.	Children fail in school for many reasons, but research indicates that the very experience of failure—regardless of whether the failure is linked to the students' abilities—places them at higher-risk for negative behavior.
Low commitment to school	When young people cease to see the school role as viable, they are at higher risk of engaging in the health risk behaviors
Protective Factors	
Opportunities for prosocial involvement	When young people are given more opportunities to participate meaningfully in important activities at school, they are less likely to engage in problem behaviors.
Rewards for prosocial involvement	When young people are recognized and rewarded for their contributions at school, they are less likely to be involved in health risk behaviors.

- In 2004, about four in ten Washington students are at risk due to low commitment to school or academic failure. More than half of 8th and 10th grade students reported opportunities and rewards for meaningful school participation. The only significant difference from 2002 to 2004 was an increased percentage for 6th graders of the risk factor low commitment to school.

Table 11: Profile of School Risk Factors by Grade: 2000, 2002, and 2004

		Percent of Students Who Reported Risk or Protective Factor											
		Grade 6			Grade 8			Grade 10			Grade 12		
Factor		2000	2002	2004	2000	2002	2004	2000	2002	2004	2000	2002	2004
Risk	Academic failure	39.9	41.2	40.6	41.4	47.3	48.2 ^a	38.2	46.8	47.2 ^a	41.3	48.5	46.6 ^a
	Low commitment to school	35.2	40.5	44.4 ^{a, b}	39.4	34.4	37.1 ^b	42.5	37.3	40.7	47.3	37.6	42.2 ^{a, b}
Protective	Opportunities for prosocial involvement	59.2	—	—	60.5	62.6	62.2	57.4	59.6	58.5	57.7	63.5	61.2
	Rewards for prosocial involvement	60.1	50.5	52.3 ^a	52.8	52.1	53.4	59.3	61.4	61.2	45.0	45.8	44.6

Note. Percentages represent students at-risk or resilient based upon their risk and protective factor scale scores. Dashes indicate that the risk factor was not included in the survey that year. ^aStatistically significant change from 2000 to 2004. ^bStatistically significant change from 2002 to 2004. ^cItems in the risk or protective factor changed over time so the result is not comparable

¹¹ Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Health, Department of Social and Health Services, and Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development and RMC Research Corporation. Washington State Healthy Youth Survey 2004: Analytic Report

Weapon Carrying At School ***Critical Health Objective***

Demographics:

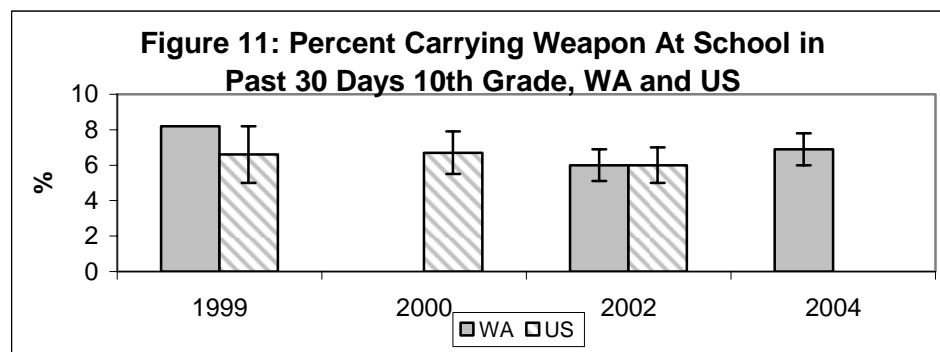
Table 12: Weapon Carrying At School In Past 30 Days, WA HYS 2004

Grade (p<0.001)	WA % (95% CI)
Grade 6	*
Grade 8	5.4 (4.8,6.1)
Grade 10	6.9 (6.0,7.9)
Grade 12	7.7 (6.9,8.6)
National Target (grades 9-12): 4.9%	
Gender (10th grade) (p<0.001)	
Male	10.2 (8.7,11.9)
Female	3.9 (3.3, 4.7)
Race/ Ethnicity (10th grade) (p<0.001)	
White	5.9 (4.9, 7.0)
Black	9.9 (6.6, 14.5)
American Indian /Alaska Native	16.8 (10.6,25.6)
Asian	3.9 (2.4, 6.4)
Hispanic	9.3 (6.6,13.1)
Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	6.8 (3.0,14.5)
Other	12.9 (10.1,16.4)
More than One Race	6.8 (4.8,9.5)
Disability – 10th grade (p < 0.001)	
Disability	9.4 (7.4,11.8)
No disability	4.0 (3.3, 5.0)
Rural Urban Residence (10th grade) (p=0.06)	
Urban Core	6.2 (5.2, 7.5)
Urban Rural Fringe	8.4 (6.7,10.6)
Large Town	6.5 (4.5, 9.4)
Small Town / Isolated Rural	9.6 (6.6,13.7)

*Data not available

Source: Healthy Youth Survey 2004

Trend and National Data ¹²

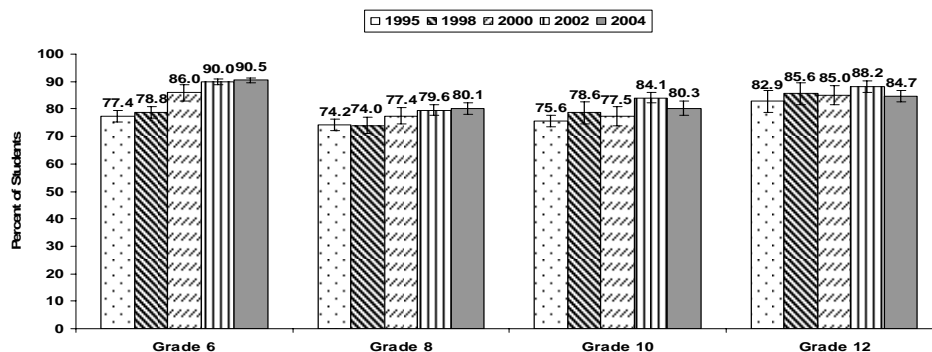


Source: Healthy Youth Survey 2004

¹² *National comparison for 2000 was YRBS 2001 and for 2002 was YRBS 2003. Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Surveillance Summaries

Background:

- **HP 2010 Objective:** Reducing weapon carrying on school property is one of the **21 National Critical Health objectives** for adolescents and young adults. The Healthy People 2010 Objective is to reduce weapon carrying on school property to no more than 4.9%.
- **Feel Safe at School:** In 2004 about 90 % of students in grades 6 and 80% in grades 8, 10 and 12 reported they feel safe at school compared to about 85% of 6th and 12th graders and 77% of 8th and 10th graders in 2000.

Figure 12: Perceived Safety at School¹³

Source: Healthy Youth Survey 2004

- **Fights at School:** In 2004, about 16% of 8th graders, 11% of 10th graders, and 7% of 12th graders reported they had been in a physical fight on school property at least once in the past year.
- **Attending School Drunk or High:** About 8% of 8th graders, 15% of 10th graders, and 18% of 12th graders reported in 2004 that they had been drunk or high at school at least once in the past year, which represents a decrease from 1998 but is essentially unchanged since 2000.

WA Prevalence: About 5% of Washington 8th graders, 7% of 10th graders, and 8% of 12th graders reported they carried a weapon like a gun or knife on school property in the past 30 days.

U.S. Prevalence: In 2003, about 6% of 10th grade students nationally reported they carried a weapon on school property in the past 30 days.¹⁴

Trends: There was a slight but not significant decrease in reported weapon carrying at school by 10th graders since 1999.

Disparities:

- **Grade:** Older students were more likely than younger students to report they carried a weapon on school property in the last 30 days ($p < 0.001$) (Table 12).
- **Gender:** Males are more likely than females to report carrying a weapon at school ($p < 0.001$) (Table 12).
- **Race/ Ethnicity:** There were significant differences in reports of weapon carrying at school in the past year by race/ethnicity ($p < 0.001$) (Table 12). See technical notes on p values and confidence intervals for further use of the data in Table 12.

¹³ Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Health, Department of Social and Health Services, and Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development and RMC Research Corporation. Washington State Healthy Youth Survey 2004: Analytic Report

¹⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Surveillance Summaries*, May 21, 2004. MMWR 2004;53(No. SS-2).

- **Disability:** Students with disabilities were more likely to report carrying a weapon at school than students without disabilities ($p < 0.001$) (Table 12).

Reports of Weapons in Schools ¹⁵

- In 2003-2004 school year, there were 2,773 reported incidents of weapons in public schools and 10 in private schools in Washington.

Table 13: Weapon Reports in Schools, WA 2003-20043

Public School Incidents

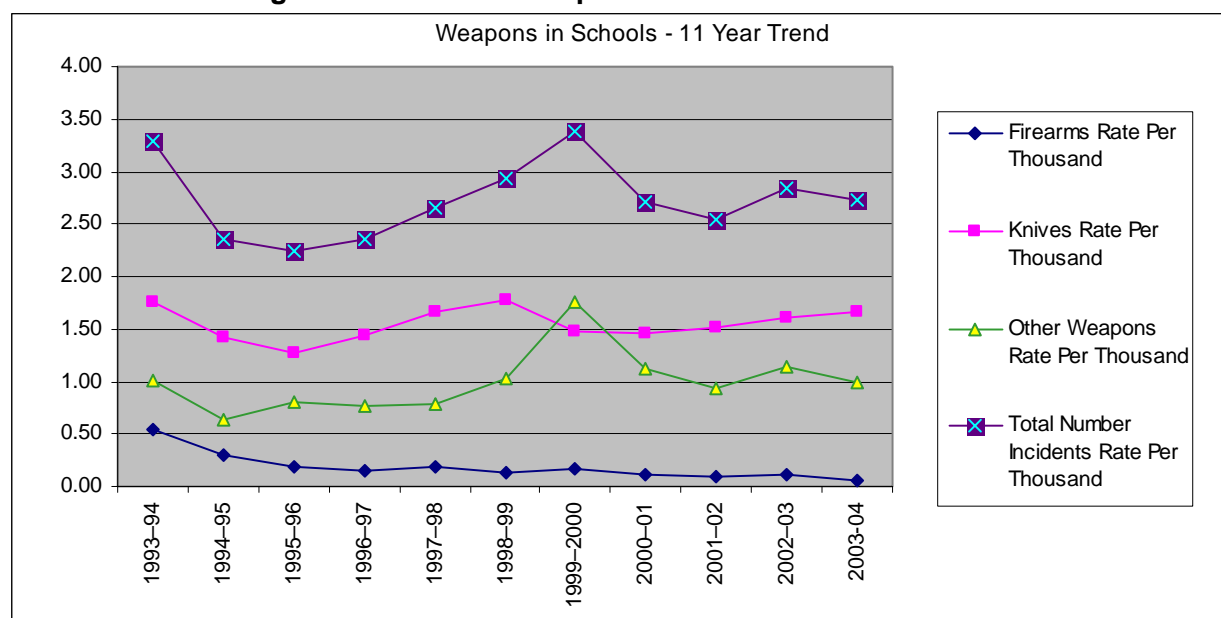
No. of Districts	No. Reporting	Handguns	Rifles Shotguns	Other Firearms	Total Firearms	Knives Daggers	Other Weapons	Total
296	296 (100%)	30	5	22	57	1689	1027	2773

Private School Incidents

No. of Schools	No. Reporting	Handguns	Rifles Shotguns	Other Firearms	Total Firearms	Knives Daggers	Other Weapons	Total
493	109 (22%)	0	0	0	0	7	3	10

- The rate of weapons in Washington schools peaked in 1999-2001.

Figure 13: Rates of Weapons in WA Schools 1993-2004



¹⁵ (Source: Report to the Legislature on Weapons in Schools: OSPI website: <http://www.k12.wa.us/SafeDrugFree/WeaponsReport.aspx>)

School Environment and Student Performance.¹⁶**School Work Meaningful:**

- About 56% of 6th graders, 47% of 8th graders, 34% of 10th graders and 30% of 12th graders said that the school work they were assigned was almost always or often meaningful and important. About 14% of 6th graders, 21% of 8th graders and 29% of 10th and 12th graders said that the school work they were assigned was seldom or never meaningful and important.
- 10th grade girls (37%) were more likely than boys (30%) to say their school work was meaningful.

School Work Interesting:

- About 47% of 6th graders, 34% of 8th graders, 30% of 10th graders and 37% of 12th graders said they thought their courses were very or quite interesting. About 6% of 6th and 12th graders, 10% of 8th graders, and 8% of 10th graders thought their courses were very dull.
- There were no significant differences in 10th grade girls (31%) or boys (28%) reporting their school work was interesting.

Future Importance of School:

- About 81% of 6th graders, 68% of 8th graders, 51% of 10th graders, and 42% of 12th graders said they thought what they learned in school was very or quite important for later in life.
- There were no significant differences in 10th grade girls (53%) or boys (48%) reporting school was important for later life.

Educational Plans:

- About 2% of 8th, 10th, and 12th graders reported they did not think they would graduate from high school. About 90% thought they would attend some college or obtain college or graduate degrees.
- 10th grade girls (94%) were more likely to report plans to continue school post high school than boys (90%).

Enjoy Being in School:

- About 56% of 6th graders, 46% of 8th graders, 41% of 10th graders, and 37% of 12th graders reported they enjoyed being in school in the past year often or almost always. About 14% of 6th graders and 24-28% of 8th, 10th, and 12th graders reported they seldom or never enjoyed being in school.
- 10th grade girls (45%) were more likely to report they enjoyed being in school than boys (35%).

School Policies¹⁷

Based on data from the 2004 Washington State School Health Education Profile:

Health Education in the schools

¹⁶ Source: Healthy Youth Survey 2004 Data

¹⁷ Source: 2004 Washington State School Health Education Profile (SHEP). [Survey of school principals administered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.] [Note: Percentages are of schools, not students.]

- Parent Support for health education: According to data from the 2004 Profile survey, few Washington students are exempted or excused from any part of a required health education course by parental consent. In about 25% of the schools, students cannot be exempted, in 63% of the schools, less than 1% of the students are exempted; in about 11% of the schools 1%-5% are exempted, and in only 1% of the schools, more than 5% of the students are exempted or excused.
- About 55% of the Washington schools surveyed in 2004 report that a school health committee or advisory group develops policies, coordinates activities, or seeks student or family involvement in programs that address health issues.

Physical Education

- About 52% of schools with 11th and 12th graders, 83% with 10th graders, 92% with 9th graders, and about 96% with 8th, 7th and 6th graders have a requirement that a physical education course be taught.

Before and After School Activities

- About 64% of Washington schools surveyed offer opportunities to participate in before- or after-school intramural activities or physical activity clubs.
- About 44% provide transportation for students who participate in after-school intramural activities or physical activity clubs.

Tobacco Policies

- All of the Washington schools surveyed have adopted a policy prohibiting tobacco use.
- About 97% of these tobacco prevention policies prohibit cigarettes and smokeless tobacco use and 94% prohibit cigars and pipes.
- Most policies also prohibit the use of these substances by faculty/ staff or visitors.
- Most of these policies include school and non-school hours.
- About 97% of schools prohibit tobacco advertising on school grounds, buses, or in school publications.

Nutrition

- About 91% of the schools surveyed report that students can purchase snack foods or beverages from vending machines or at school stores.
- About 46% of schools report fruits and vegetables, 64% report low fat goods and 86% report 100% fruit juice can be purchased from vending machines or the school store.
- About 72% of schools report chocolate candy, 75% report salty non low fat snacks, and 97% report sodas can be purchased from vending machines or the school store.
- Most schools reported these snack foods or beverages are available before classes and during lunch periods.

Safety in Schools

- About 74% of the schools surveyed maintain a closed campus (students are not allowed to leave school during school day, including during lunchtime).
- About 4% require students to wear an identification badge, 4% use metal detectors, and 42% have uniformed police, undercover police, or security guards during the regular school day.

- About 29% of the schools have a peer mediation program, 28% have a program to prevent gang violence, and 68% have a program to prevent bullying.
- 94% of the schools have a written plan for responding to violence at the school.

<p style="text-align: center;">See Services Chapters on School-Based Health Centers, Nutrition Services. See Data Section on Injury and Violence.</p>
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